

Michelle Mata - Concerns about Fireworks Permitting

From: James Unger <junger@hornblower.com>
To: <mmata@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 12/9/2010 2:01 PM
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Regional Water Quality Control Board
9174 Sky Park Ct # 100
San Diego, CA 92123-4353

Dear Hon. Members of the Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Tentative Order R9-2010-0124 regarding the public display of fireworks. Hornblower Cruises and Events has been putting on fireworks for over 20 years, for corporate events, as well as observed the July 4th and New Years Eve civic fireworks events. We are concerned that the proposed Tentative Order raises many complicated and vague requirements and threatens to end important traditions which thousands of citizens count on each year. We are also not aware of any evidence that our show has caused or is otherwise a threat to the environment.

First, we believe that the extensive permitting, monitoring and BMPs proposed in the Tentative Order could add tens of thousands of dollars and make the economics of shows prohibitive. Several people have estimated that the water and sediment monitoring alone, could cost between \$30,000 and \$100,000 per event, depending on the amount of testing required to prove a negative. We do not believe that we would be capable of raising the additional funds necessary to implement these regulations.

Second, we do not understand why once or twice yearly fireworks shows are being singled out for regulation. These shows have been going on for decades, and no one has ever suggested that these patriotic and civic displays present a water quality problem. In fact, your order provides no evidence that once or twice a year fireworks shows, cause any problems. Massive fireworks shows are done each year over bodies of water throughout the United States, but do not require the monitoring and permitting suggested in the proposed Tentative Order. We do not believe that there is a problem, and ask that you exempt our short and occasional shows from these regulations. We understand no other fireworks event in the country other than SeaWorld San Diego has a fireworks permit under the Clean Water Act, and our show is much smaller than SeaWorld's summer-long show. We also understand inland fireworks over inland water bodies are exempted. The scientific evidence, even at SeaWorld, shows no significant environmental impacts.

Lastly, fireworks are part of the social fabric of our community. It is hard to imagine that a single American has not watched fireworks at some point on the Fourth of July or New Years Eve. They are part of a public celebration of our collective liberty that brings the entire community together. We are at a loss to understand why the Regional Board would want to regulate out of existence something that is so important to so many. We hope the Regional

Board will reconsider the merit of this proposed regulation, or find that infrequent , professionally administered fireworks events have minimal impact and do not require any onerous regulation.

Sincerely,

Jim

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Jim Unger

Vice President, San Diego

Hornblower Cruises & Events

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